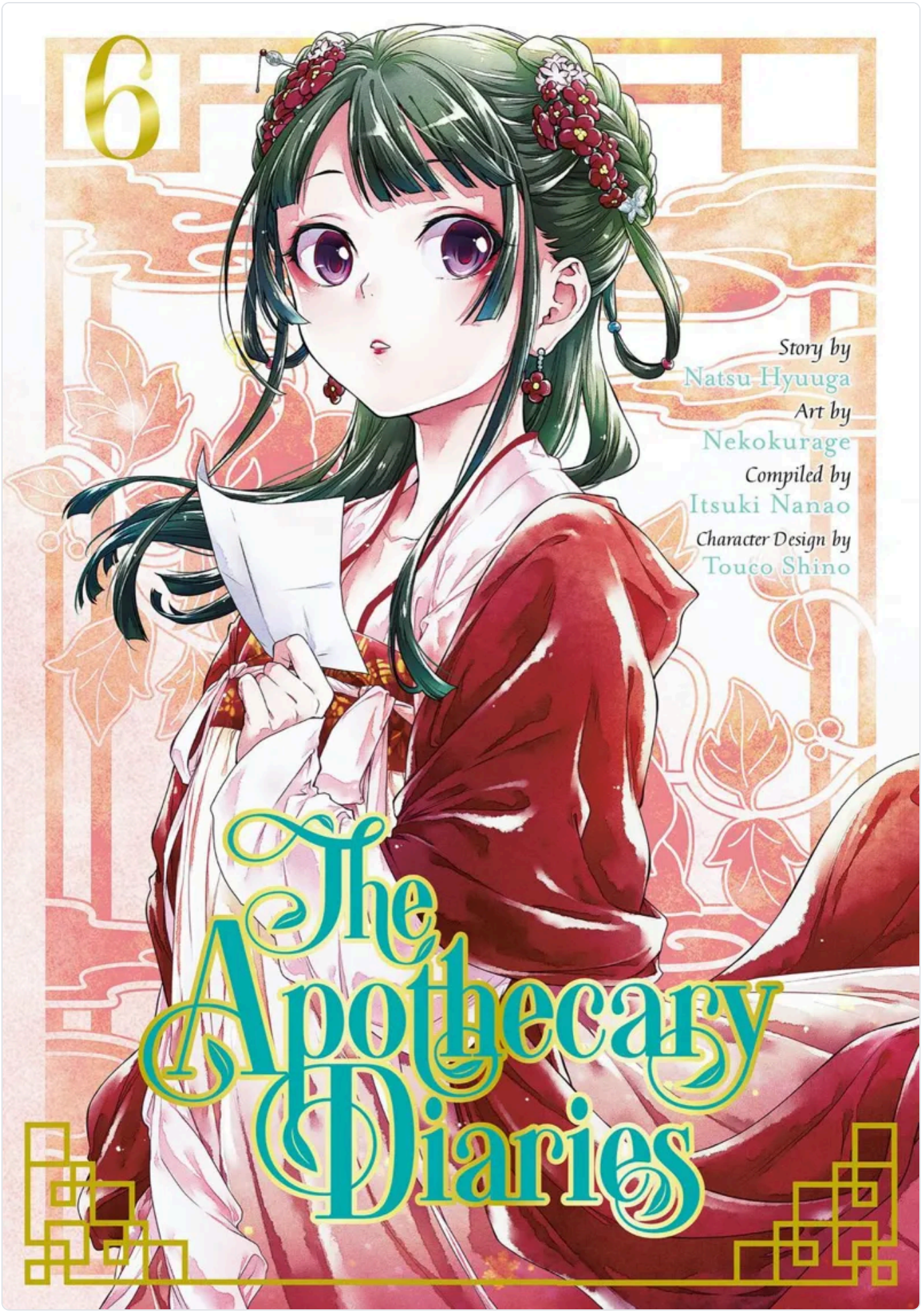
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Art by
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Compiled by
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Character Design by
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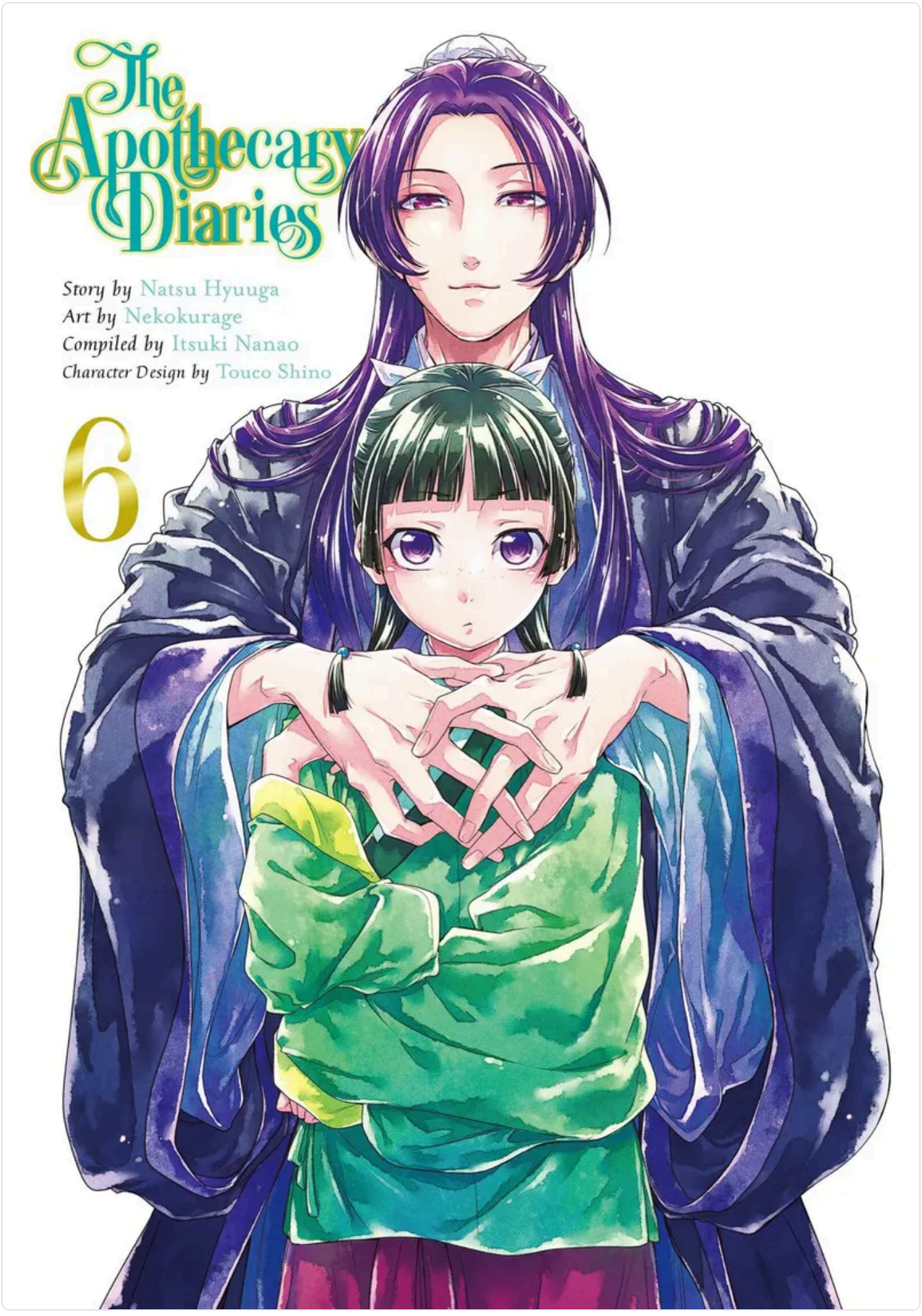
The Apothecary Diaries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The Apothecary Diaries

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TELL ME...
DO YOU KNOW MUCH ABOUT MAKEUP?
YES?
AGAIN WITH THE UTTERLY RANDOM QUES-TIONS...

3

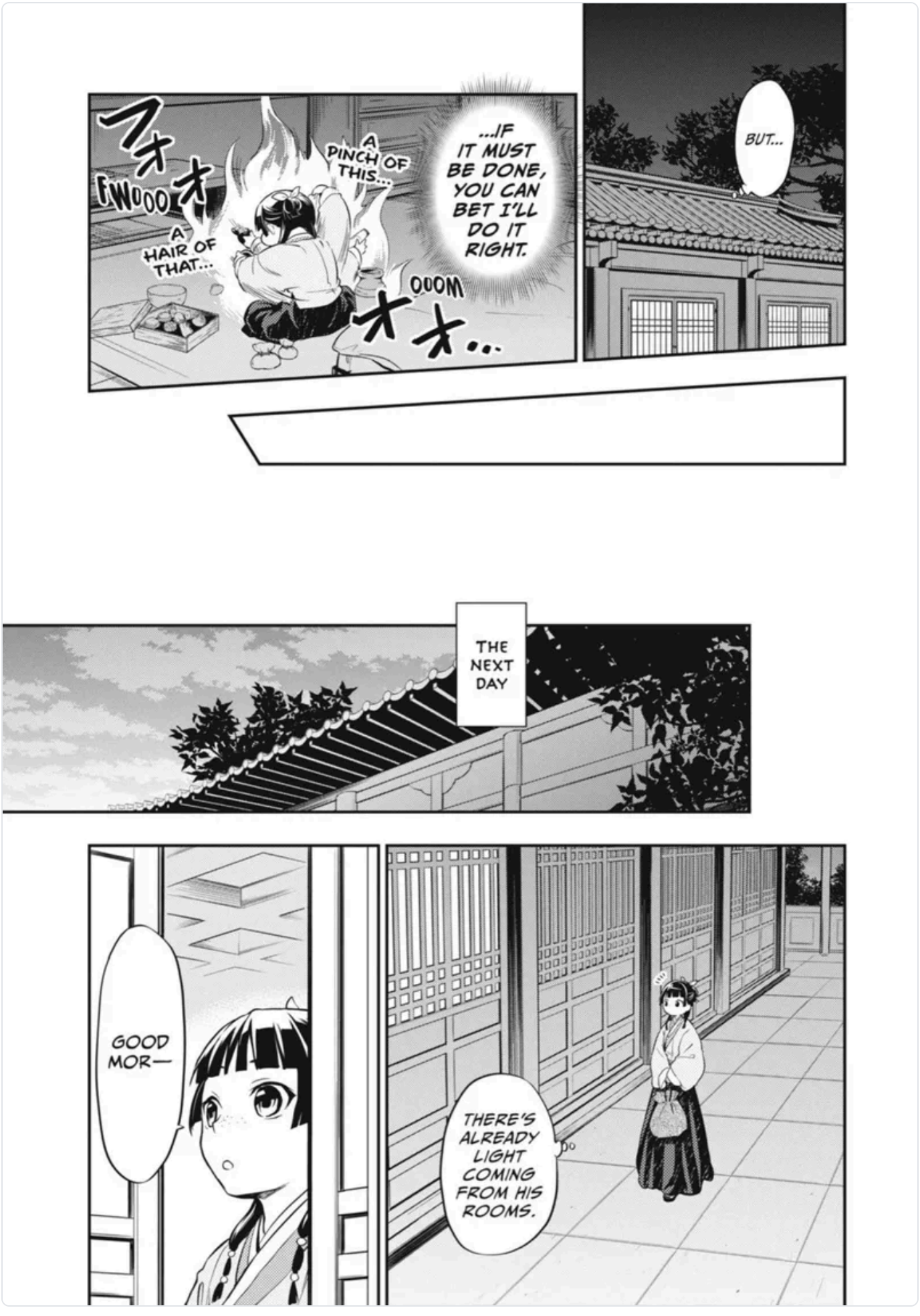
DID YOU HAVE A GIFT FOR SOMEONE IN MIND?
...SO IT WOULD BE A LIE TO SAY I'M NOT WELL-VERSED ON THE SUBJECT.
AND ON TOP OF CONCOCTING MEDICINES, I'VE MADE COSMETICS TOO...
GROWING UP IN THE PLEASURE DISTRICT, YOU LEARN TO DO MAKEUP WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT.
NO.
I'M THE ONE IN NEED OF IT.
EXCUSE ME?

Chapter 27 Makeup

HISTORY IS RIFE WITH TRIVIAL WARS...
...AND A FAIR FEW OF THEM HAVE BEEN INCITED BY BEWITCHINGLY BEAUTIFUL WOMEN.
JINSHI, IN HIS UNADORNED PERSON ALONE, POSSESSES BEAUTY THAT TRANSCENDS GENDER.
TO FURTHER ACCENT THIS APPEAL WITH MAKEUP ...
DO YOU WANT TO SEE THE COUNTRY GO UP IN FLAMES?
WHY WOULD YOU EVEN THINK SUCH A THING?!
GOOD GRIEF.
WHAT ABSURD SCENARIO IS RUNNING THROUGH YOUR HEAD THIS TIME? I CAN ONLY IMAGINE...
TAP TAP
THE STUFF ON YOUR FACE... HOW DO YOU MAKE IT?

WHEN IN NEED OF A MUCH DARKER SHADE, I ADD IN CHARCOAL OR ROUGE.
DOES IT REQUIRE A LOT OF TIME TO MAKE?
RUSTLE
I DRY CLAY, PULVERIZE IT, THEN MIX THE POWDER WITH OIL.
RUSTLE
OHH, SO THIS IS ABOUT ME?
PLAP
THIS IS ALL I HAVE LEFT AT THE MOMENT, BUT I CAN MAKE MORE IF YOU GIVE ME ONE NIGHT.
A TONIC OR POTION THAT COULD CHANGE MY APPEARANCE WOULD BE TERRIBLY CONVENIENT, SHOULD YOU KNOW OF ANY.
I THINK THIS SHADE IS A BIT TOO DARK FOR YOUR SKIN.
SMEAR

IF IT'S POSING AS A COMMONER THAT YOU'RE AFTER...
...I THINK WE COULD MAKE IT WORK.
WELL, LET'S DO THAT.
IF A PERMANENT CHANGE WOULD SUIT...
...LACQUERING YOUR FACE WOULD DO THE TRICK.
I THINK I'LL PASS.
AS YOU WISH.
MAKE ME LOOK LIKE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HE'S UP TO THIS TIME...
...BUT I'M NOT FOOLHARDY ENOUGH TO ASK.
BEST TO JUST KEEP MY HEAD DOWN AND DO AS I'M TOLD.
8


フォォ
FWOOO
A HAIR OF THAT...
A PINCH OF THIS...
...IF IT MUST BE DONE, YOU CAN BET I'LL DO IT RIGHT.
BUT...
OOOM
THE NEXT DAY
GOOD MOR—
THERE'S ALREADY LIGHT COMING FROM HIS ROOMS.

NOW THAT'S A LUXURY AFFORDED ONLY TO NOBILITY.

IS THIS SOME NEW FORM OF MOCK-ERY?
I SPEAK ONLY THE TRUTH.
NO, NO.
I WAS SIMPLY CONSIDERING THAT YOU LOOK LOVELY ONCE AGAIN TODAY, MY GOOD SIR.

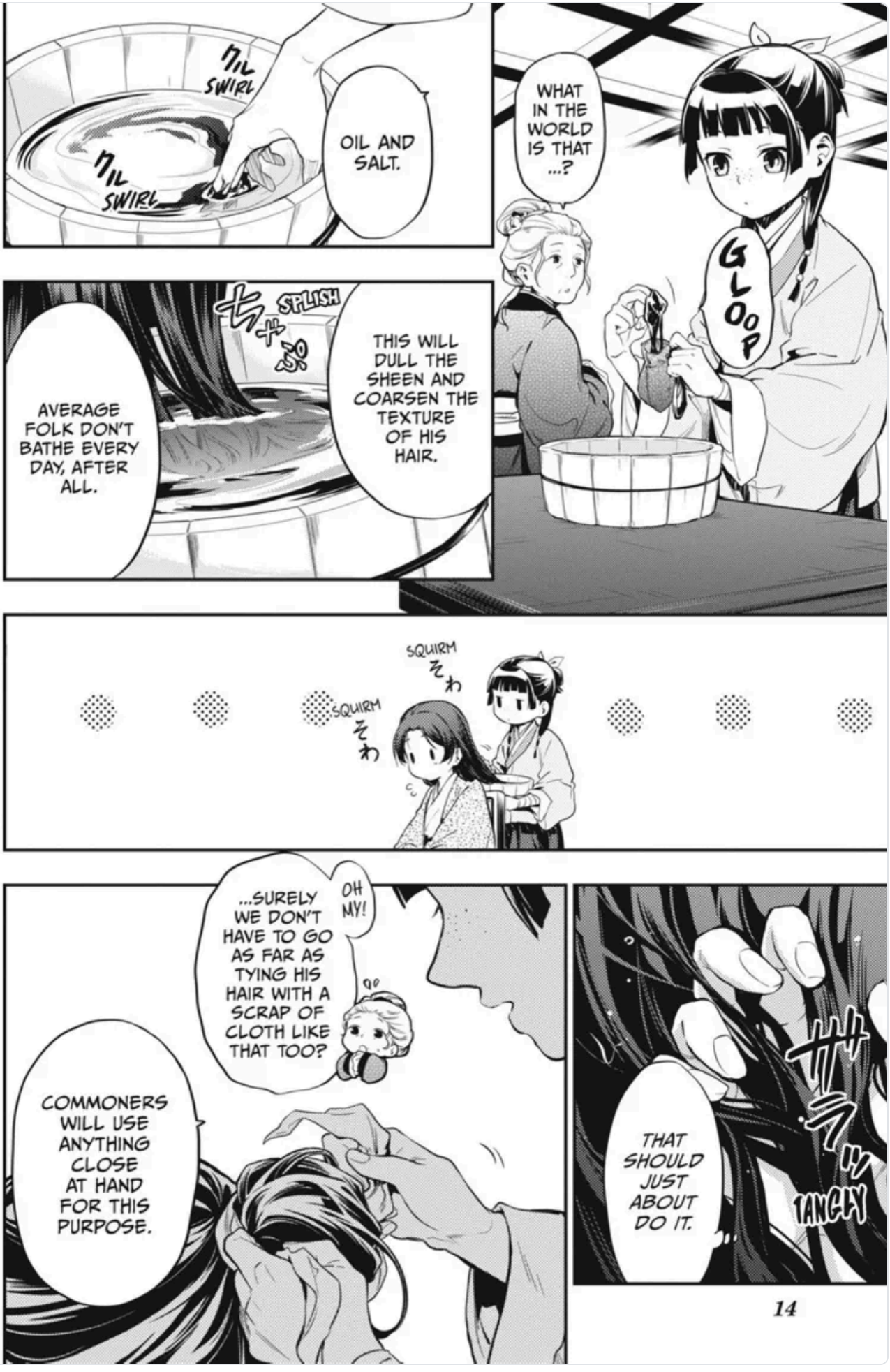
WHAT IS IT? YOU'RE ALREADY WEARING A SCOWL, AND THE DAY HAS YET TO BEGIN.

YOU'RE SURE YOU WANT TO BECOME ANOTHER PERSON?
THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN SAYING SINCE LAST NIGHT!
ARE YOU NOT IN THE MOOD TO WORK THIS MORNING?
NO, NOT AT ALL.
QUITE THE OPPOSITE, ACTUALLY. BECAUSE I WAS TASKED WITH THIS...
...I CAME PREPARED AND THEN SOME.
HE REALLY DOESN'T HAVE A CLUE, DOES HE?
STRIDE
STRIDE
STRIDE
STRIDE
IN THAT CASE, PLEASE FORGIVE MY IMPER-TINENCE, SIR.

11

!
GRAB
OH MY WORD!
WH- WHY THIS SUDDEN FASCI- NATION WITH MY SCENT?!
SNIFF
SNIFF
YOUR CURRENT GARB...
...IS AT BEST SOMETHING A JUNIOR MINISTER WOULD WEAR CASUALLY.
I VERY MUCH DOUBT THE IMPORTING OF AROMATIC WOODS FROM OVERSEAS IS WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF SOMEONE OF THAT STANDING.
FWIP
NO COMMONER WOULD BURN SUCH FINE INCENSE.

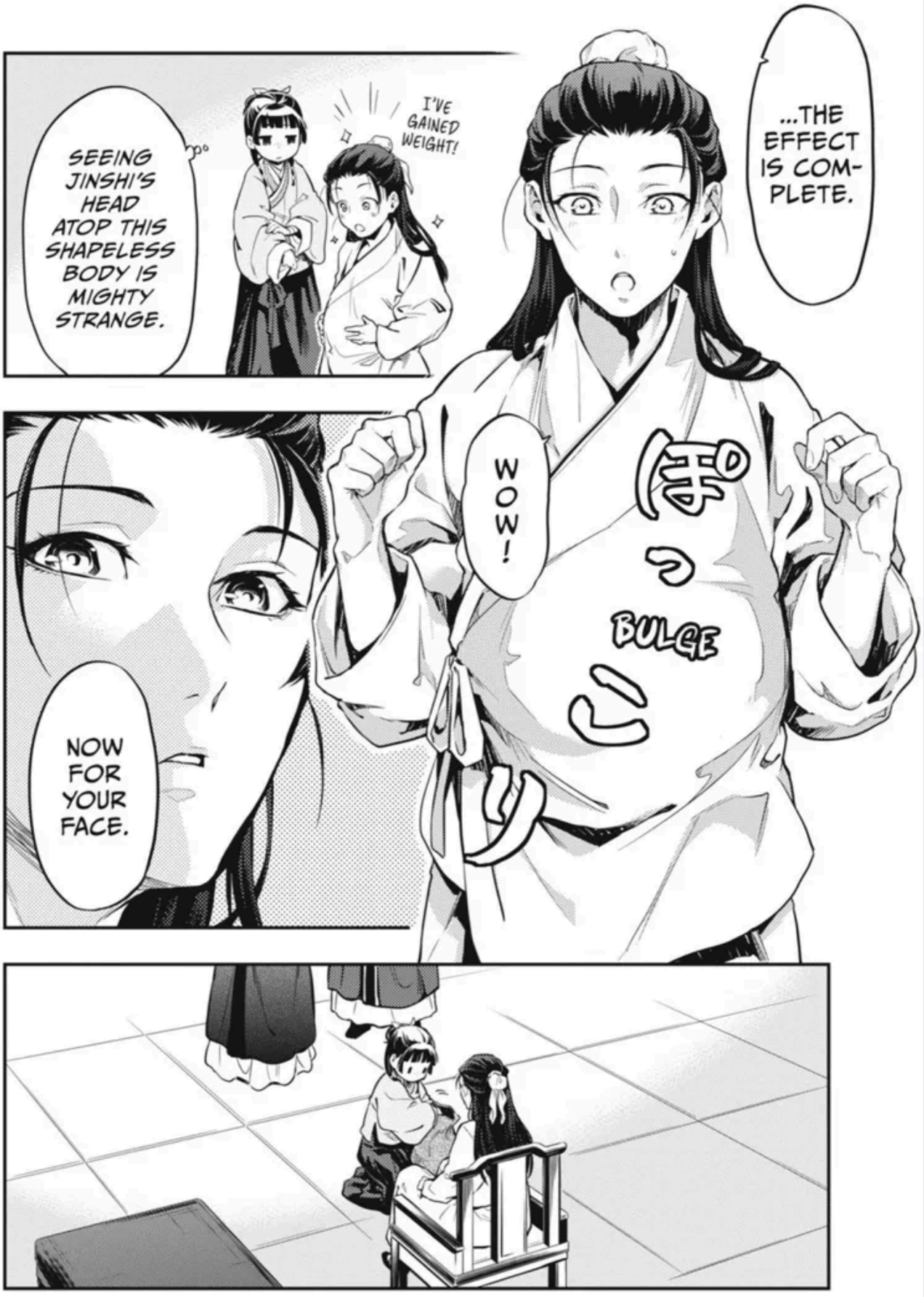
SINCE IT'S NECESSARY IN IDENTIFYING MEDICINAL HERBS FROM POISONOUS ONES, MY NOSE HAS CAUSE TO BE KEENER THAN MOST.
I'M AMAZED YOU COULD TELL!
SNIFF
SNIFF
TO MASK THE PERFUMED SCENT ON HIS SKIN...
...SOMETHING PUNGENT THAT HAS YET TO BE WASHED WOULD BE BEST, IF POSSIBLE.
VERY WELL.
GAO SHUN.
WE'LL NEED TO GET YOU INTO DIFFERENT ROBES, TO START.
MAY I ASK YOU TO SEE TO THAT?
YES.
NOW, THEN...
WHILE THAT'S BEING TAKEN CARE OF, LET'S SEE TO YOUR HAIR.


OIL AND SALT.
SWIRL
SWIRL
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS THAT ...?
GLOOP
THIS WILL DULL THE SHEEN AND COARSEN THE TEXTURE OF HIS HAIR.
SPLISH
AVERAGE FOLK DON'T BATHE EVERY DAY, AFTER ALL.
SQUIRM
SQUIRM
OH MY!
...SURELY WE DON'T HAVE TO GO AS FAR AS TYING HIS HAIR WITH A SCRAP OF CLOTH LIKE THAT TOO?
COMMONERS WILL USE ANYTHING CLOSE AT HAND FOR THIS PURPOSE.
THAT SHOULD JUST ABOUT DO IT.
TANGLY
14

I HAVE WHAT YOU ASKED FOR.
...BUT...
...IS THIS TRULY WHAT WE NEED?
くたぁ...
DECIMATED
EEK!
I'D HAVE LIKED SOME-THING RIPER, BUT THESE WILL DO.
SNIFF くん
SNIFF くん
SIR JINSHI.
PLEASE TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTHES.
OH! RIGHT.
WOBBLE よろ

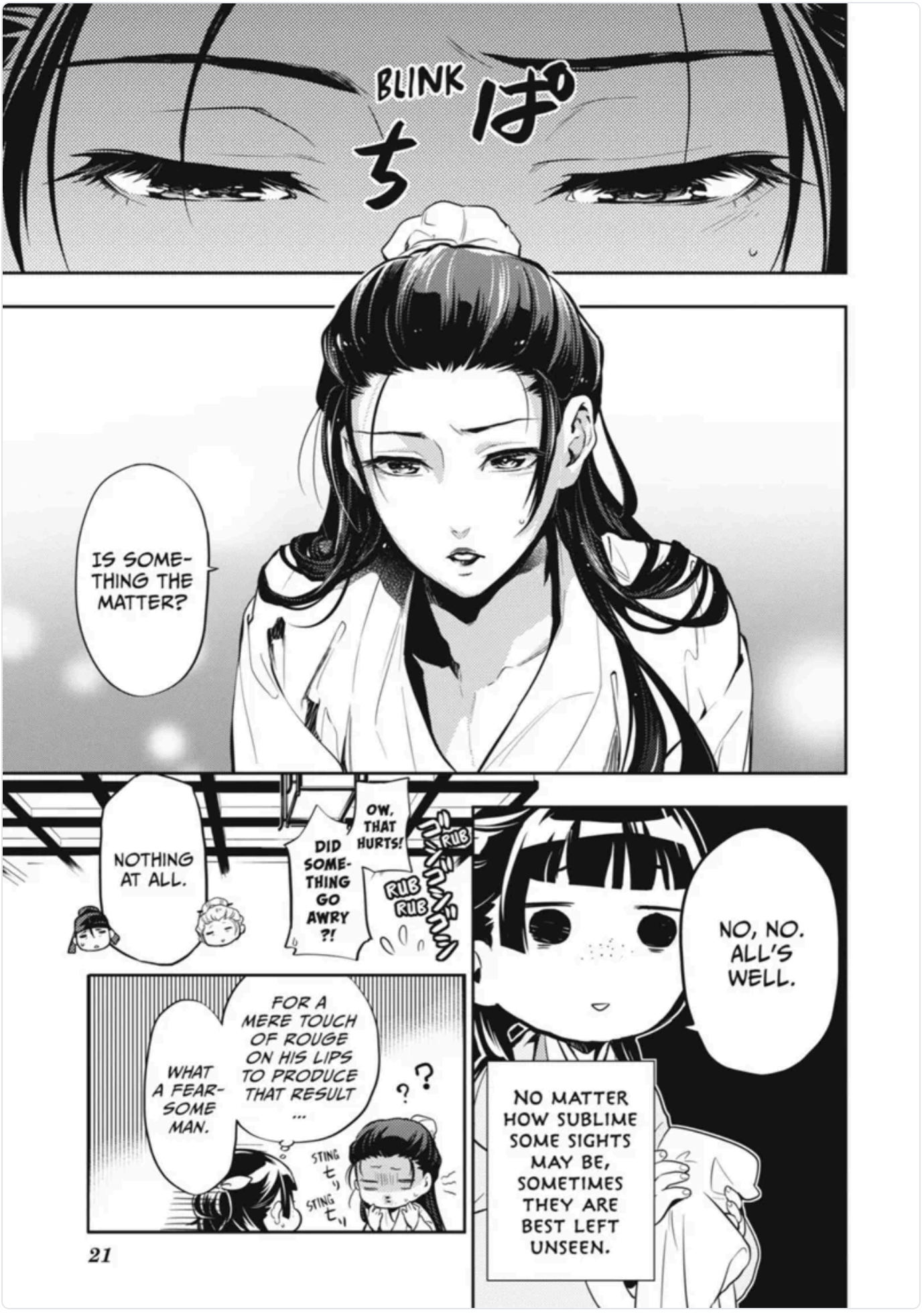
FOR SUCH A HEAVENLY BEAUTY OF A EUNUCH ...
...HE'S SHOCKINGLY WELL-PROPORTIONED AND MUSCULAR OF BUILD.
GLANCE キョロ
GLANCE キョロ
MAY I USE THOSE TOWELS?
IF YOU MUST.
BUT WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME WILL YOU DO WITH THEM?

...TO LEND A HAND WITH THIS?
MIGHT I ASK YOU TWO...
...WE'LL WRAP THEM AROUND SIR JINSHI TO CHANGE HIS BODY SHAPE.
BEFORE HE GETS DRESSED ...
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
VERY WELL!
...I'LL SECURE THEM WITH THESE STRIPS OF CLOTH.
SUIREN, AS YOU HOLD THE WRAPPED TOWELS IN PLACE...
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
ALL RIGHT.
GAO SHUN, PLEASE WRAP THE TOWELS AROUND HIM, IF YOU WOULD.
ONCE SIR JINSHI PUTS THE CLOTHES ON OVER THIS...
BUSTLE
BUSTLE


...THE EFFECT IS COMPLETE.
WOW!
ぽっこり
BULGE
I'VE GAINED WEIGHT!
SEEING JINSHI'S HEAD ATOP THIS SHAPELESS BODY IS MIGHTY STRANGE.
NOW FOR YOUR FACE.

SHUT YOUR EYES FOR ME PLEASE.
I MADE A QUANTITY OF MAKEUP IN DARKER SHADES TO YOUR SKIN.
WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU THE SUNTANNED LOOK OF A COMMONER WITH IT.
EVEN TOUCHING IT UP CLOSE LIKE THIS, HIS SKIN IS BEYOND FLAW-LESS.
NEVER MIND THE SHADOW OF A BEARD, THERE'S NOT A PORE IN SIGHT.
I WONDER JUST HOW ALLURING HE'D LOOK IF I DID HIM UP LIKE A WOMAN...
?
RUSTLE
GRIN

!
DAB
I'D NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF FOR MISSING SUCH AN OPPOR-TUNITY!
AHA!
...WE WOULD HAVE A CRISIS ON OUR HANDS.
IF ANYONE ELSE LAID EYES ON HIM NOW...
I'M SO GLAD IT'S JUST US THREE HERE.


BLINK
ぱ
ち
IS SOME-THING THE MATTER?
NOTHING AT ALL.
DID SOME-THING GO AWRY ?!
OW, THAT HURTS!
RUB
RUB RUB
NO, NO. ALL'S WELL.
NO MATTER HOW SUBLIME SOME SIGHTS MAY BE, SOMETIMES THEY ARE BEST LEFT UNSEEN.
WHAT A FEAR-SOME MAN.
FOR A MERE TOUCH OF ROUGE ON HIS LIPS TO PRODUCE THAT RESULT ...
? ?
STING
STING
21

PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, MAOMAO.
BETTER TO ERASE WHAT I JUST SAW FROM MY MEMORY.
TO START, CREATE A BLOTCHY COMPLEXION WITH THE MAKEUP.
USING A DARKER SHADE OF THE STUFF, GIVE HIM CIRCLES UNDER THE EYES.
...THEN THICKEN AND LENGTHEN HIS EYEBROWS TO ALTER THEIR SHAPE.
DRAW IN SOME DISTINCTIVE TRAITS, LIKE MOLES AND SUCH, THAT HE DOESN'T ACTUALLY HAVE...
THAT CONCLUDES THE MAKEUP FOR YOUR FACE.
PLEASE HOLD OUT YOUR HANDS NEXT.
MY HANDS TOO?
I GUESS IT WOULDN'T DO FOR HIM TO HAVE LONG, PALE, DELICATE HANDS.
THEY'RE QUITE FINE AND MASCU-LINE.
...HM?

...MEH.
NO NEED TO ASK STUPID QUESTIONS.
SQUIRM
SQUIRM
ちら, PEEK
NOT THAT A EUNUCH WOULD USUALLY REQUIRE SUCH SKILLS ...
I THOUGHT HE'D ONLY BE IN THE HABIT OF LIFTING WRITING BRUSHES AND CHOPSTICKS, NOTHING HEAVIER...
...BUT PERHAPS HE'S TRAINED WITH A SWORD OR SOME KIND OF POLE-ARM.
?
HE HAS A HARD CALLUS ON HIS PALM.
さわ TOUCH
さわ TOUCH
PHEW!
AND AS WITH YOUR FACE...
...I USED THE MAKEUP TO GIVE YOUR HANDS THAT SAME MOTTLED LOOK.
OOH! MY HANDS ARE FILTHY NOW!
I PACKED MAKEUP UNDER YOUR FINGERNAILS TO GIVE THEM THAT AIR OF UNCLEANLI-NESS.
ALL DONE.

LICK A LITTLE AND WET YOUR LIPS, THEN DRINK IT DOWN SLOWLY.
IT WILL CAUSE YOUR MOUTH AND THROAT TO SWELL, CHANGING THE SOUND OF YOUR VOICE.
MY VOICE, HMM ...?
HERE, DRINK THIS.
WHOA!
WHAT IN BLAZES IS THIS STUFF ?!
IT'S QUITE SPICY, BUT I ASSURE YOU THAT IT'S NOT POISON-OUS.
BLERGH!
HIS LOOKS AND SCENT MIGHT BE UNRECOG-NIZABLE NOW...
...BUT THAT HONEYED VOICE OF HIS COULD BE A DEAD GIVEAWAY TO SOME.
WHAT I GAVE JINSHI IS A MIX OF SEVERAL KINDS OF IRRITANTS.
IN ALL HONESTY, I'D BE HARD-PRESSED TO CALL THE STUFF PALATABLE.

AND FOR THE FINISHING TOUCH— COTTON WOOL.
AAAAAAH...?
AAH.
NOD コク...
RIKE DISH?
MOOSH もご
ALL RIGHT.
STUFF THESE INSIDE YOUR CHEEKS TO CHANGE THE CONTOURS OF YOUR FACE.
...HUH? COTTON WOOL?
THAT'S IT! YOU'RE DONE!

HOW DO I LOOK ...?
I DOUBT ANYONE WILL BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE YOU NOW, YOUNG MASTER.
PLEASE STOP CALLING ME THAT.
MY! IS IT TRULY YOU, YOUNG MAS-TER?
I GUESS THERE'S JUST NO HIDING SUCH SUPREME NATURAL GIFTS.
...BUT HE STILL HAS THE AIR OF A HANDSOME YET JOLLY LOVER.
I'VE MANAGED TO TURN HIM INTO AN AVERAGE, IF UNKEMPT, MAN...
I SAID, STOP IT!
WHEW!
OH WELL. I'VE DONE ALL I COULD DO.

XIAO-MAO.
YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO VISIT HOME TODAY, DIDN'T YOU?
YES.
I WAS JUST ABOUT TO HEAD OUT.
I'VE GOT THE REST OF THE DAY OFF.
HAPPY うき
TIME FOR A LONG-AWAITED TRIP HOME TO THE PLEASURE DISTRICT...
...AND AN AFTERNOON SPENT CONCOCTING MY BELOVED BREWS AND POTIONS!
TUG
うき HAPPY
!!
にま〜
SMIRK
GAO SHUN HARDLY EVER SMILES.
AS IT HAPPENS, YOU AND SIR JINSHI WILL BE GOING IN THE SAME DIRECTION.
GAH!

DAZED
ぽかーん…
GLANCE
OH NO, I ALMOST SAID THAT ALOUD!
GASP
AS SIR JINSHI'S USUAL COMPANIONS, SUIREN AND I ARE EASILY IDENTIFIABLE.
IF HE'S SEEN IN THIS DISGUISE WITH HIS REGULAR ATTENDANTS ...
...WOULD THAT NOT AROUSE SUSPICIONS AND MAKE YOUR PAINS-TAKINGLY ELABORATE WORK ALL FOR NAUGHT?
OH MY, YOU DO HAVE A POINT.
WHAT IS WITH THIS TURN OF EVENTS?!
DO YOU NOT AGREE, SIR JINSHI?

IT WOULD BE A BIG HELP IF YOU CAME ALONG.
NOOO! THEY'VE EVEN WON JINSHI OVER NOW!
THAT'S TRUE.
MM-HMM...
CAUTIOUS
...SO I THINK IT WOULD BE BEST IF I DIDN'T GO WITH YOU, JUST IN CASE...
...I AM ALREADY WELL-KNOWN AS YOUR PERSONAL MAID IN SOME QUARTERS...
OH?
WHILE AN UNASSUMING MASTER CERTAINLY OUGHT TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN EQUALLY UNASSUMING ATTENDANT...
...PRAY FORGIVE ME FOR SPEAKING OUT OF TURN, BUT MY COMPANY WOULD NOT BETTER THE SITUATION.
WELL, THEN...

.....HMM, XIAO-MAO?
...PERHAPS YOU NEED A DISGUISE OF YOUR OWN!
YEEP!
...Y—
...YES, MA'AM.
OH BOY.
I SENSE NOTHING BUT TROUBLE ON THE HORIZON.